

The Universal Way of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva.

(Liberal, simplified and abridged translation for speedy daily practice).

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The Bodhisattva of Boundless Will arose from his seat, bared his right shoulder, turned towards the Buddha with joined palms and asked: “World Honored One, we yearn to know why the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, He Who Hears and Heeds the Sounds of the World, is titled thus?”

The Buddha replied to Boundless Will: “Virtuous Son! If a multitude of distressed sentient beings ensnared by myriad sorrows cry out with one heart the name of Avalokitesvara, the Bodhisattva will heed their call and release them from suffering. If those who uphold Avalokitesvara’s name were thrown into a raging inferno, they would, by the astonishing power of the Bodhisattva, be immune from the flames. And if swept away by turbulent tides, they would reach the shallows. Likewise, whenever the many who cross the oceans in search of a fortune in gold, silver, red coral, pearls and precious stones find baneful winds forcing them into perilous or haunted waters, then the whole vessel may be steered to safety if just one among them chants the name of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva. For these reasons, he is honored as He Who Hears and Heeds the Sounds of the World.”

“Furthermore, if soon to be victims of violence cry for Avalokitesvara, the attacking blades shall break and leave them uninjured. Should a mighty host of Yakshas and Rakshasas —vast enough to cover the universe— march forth to torment others, then these fearsome ghosts, upon encountering someone who holds the name of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, would be unable to even gaze at them with evil eyes, let alone do any harm. And all who are chained and fettered, whether guilty to not, will be freed and their restraints shattered upon invoking the name of Avalokitesvara. Moreover, say a merchant caravan laden with wealth and goods is about to pass through a perilous path surrounded by hoards of marauders—men with hearts hardened by hatred and grievances. If at that time one of the merchants addressed his peers: ‘My good fellows, be not afraid, for let us all chant with one heart the name of Avalokitesvara, the one who bestows fearlessness, and be thus freed from the marauders.’ Then these merchants, upon chanting ‘Homage to Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva,’ will be released from all danger and be able to see their goods to safety.”

“Boundless Will, the divine powers of Avalokitesvara Mahabodhisattva are ever so glorious. If beings stricken with lust or malice or ignorance often recall the Bodhisattva and cherish his name, they will see their vices recede. Boundless Will, Avalokitesvara possesses such bountiful and penetrating spiritual powers, thus, all beings must keep his name close to heart. If a woman wishing for a son prays and make offerings to Avalokitesvara, she will have a son replete with fortune and wisdom. If she prays for a daughter, she will be blessed with a virtuous daughter of graceful countenance, honored by all. Boundless Will! Avalokitesvara has such awe inspiring powers, sentient beings who reverently pray to him will have endless good

fortune. This is why all must receive and keep the name of Avalokitesvara.”

“Boundless Will, say someone faithfully upholds the names of sixty two hundred million Bodhisattvas, and offered bed linens, robes, alms food, and medicines to each and every one of them for a lifetime, would not the merit of such a virtuous man or woman be great?”

“Certainly, World Honored One,” was the reply from Boundless Will.

The Buddha then said: “On the other hand, if someone else who holds only the name of Avalokitesvara bows and makes offerings but once to him, the merit and blessings attained are equal to that of the previous person, and will last for all time. Boundless Will! The blessings reaped from keeping the name of Avalokitesvara are unlimited and unending.”

The Bodhisattva of Boundless Will then asked the Buddha: “World Honored One, how does Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva tour the Saha world and minister to the masses? What is his method of preaching?”

The Buddha replied: “Virtuous Son, if the inhabitants of a land need a Buddha to be liberated, Avalokitesvara will appear in the form of a Buddha and minister to them. He will manifest as a Paccekabuddha to those who have such affinities, and as an Arhat to those who seek one. If people are to be liberated by the Great Brahma King, he will appear as such and preach the Dharma, and if an audience requires the form of the Heavenly Father, he will appear as the Heavenly Father. If beings need to be ministered to by a deva from the Heaven of the Unburdened, he will appear as one, and likewise manifest as a

deva from the Greater Heaven of the Unburdened when required. If the need to appear as a Celestial Marshal arises, he will do so and preach in that form. If the form of the Celestial King Kubera is sought for, he will oblige. The same is true for the forms of princes, elders, householders, magistrates, brahmins, monks, nuns, lay devotees, matrons, youthful sons or pure maidens. He will furthermore appear as any god, dragon, yaksha, gandharva, asura, garuda, kinnara, mahoraga, human or nonhuman. And for those destined to be liberated by a Vajra God, he will manifest accordingly and preach the Dharma to them as a Vajra God.”

“Boundless Will! These are the meritorious deeds of Avalokitesvara, he graces all the lands in myriad different bodies and liberates all. So fail not to single-mindedly make offerings to Avalokitesvara, for it is this Mahabodhisattva who bestows fearlessness in moments of peril. He is known across the Saha world as the one who dispels all dangers and disasters.”

The Bodhisattva of Boundless Will then said: “ World Honored One, I shall now make an offering to Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva.” As he removed his bejeweled Livery Collar—a treasure equal to a thousand gold staters— and presented it before Avalokitesvara, he said, “O Humane One, please receive this pious offering of pearls and jewels.” Being ever humble, the Bodhisattva declined the gift. In response, the Bodhisattva of Boundless Will beseeched again, “Humane One, please accept this offering out of pity for me!”

Then, the Buddha said to Avalokitesvara: “You must accept this pious offering out of compassion for Boundless Will, the four assemblies, and for the gods, dragons, yakshas, gandharvas, asuras, garudas,

kinnaras, mahoragas, humans and nonhumans.” Thus, out of compassion for them all, Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva accepted the gift, halved it, and offered a portion each to the Buddha and the Myriad Jeweled Stupa.

Sutra is then summarized in verse form. Part not translated.

In the end, the Bodhisattva who Shouldered the Earth rose and proclaimed before the Buddha: “O World Honored One, anyone able to hear this teaching on the boundless deeds of Avalokitesvara and his universal works of mercy surely possess an abundance of merit.” And as the Buddha spoke this Sutra, the myriad beings in the congregation before Him vowed for Unsurpassed Bodhi.

Namo Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva!
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Homage to the Greatly Compassionate, Greatly Benevolent,
Avalokitesvara Mahabodhisattva!